

Filed for intro on 02/04/2002

HOUSE RESOLUTION 203
By Brooks

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Greater Imani Church and Christian Center and join with them in celebrating African American History Month.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should recognize those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, strive to enrich the lives of people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, the good people at the Greater Imani Church & Christian Center in Memphis comprise one such congregation; in February, they are celebrating Black History Month and providing a valuable service to their community through educational and historical programs; and

WHEREAS, as this year's theme is "Celebration of African Americans in the Military," the program will highlight the many invaluable contributions that have been made throughout our nation's history by African Americans in defending our nation and our freedoms; and

HR0203

01188784

WHEREAS, the word “Imani” means “faith” in Swahili, thus the name of the church, Greater Imani, serves “as a self-explanatory invitation to all of God’s people of the Diaspora to come and hear the truth”; the “Celebration” remains true to that spirit in its focusing on the remembrance of important American stories that are too often forgotten but pivotal in this nation’s history; and

WHEREAS, the program will feature the Tuskegee Airmen, a group of courageous black fighter pilots who battled the Nazi Germans over the European skies and became known as one of the greatest aerial fighting forces ever; their exploits were such that they have been immortalized on the silver screen; and

WHEREAS, Flying Ace Lt. Col. Lee A. Archer, highest scoring of the laudable group, will share his personal account of the “Black Birdmen,” as they were known by the Nazis, who both feared and respected the Airmen; and

WHEREAS, he will answer questions ranging over such topics as overcoming segregation and discrimination and the group’s remarkable record of never losing a single bomber to enemy fire during their 1,578 missions in which they earned 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 744 Air Medals, 8 Purple Hearts, and 14 Bronze Stars; and

WHEREAS, also present will be Lt. General John D. Hopper, Jr., Vice Commander of Air Education and Training Command, Randolph Air Force Base, who trains and educates more than 370,000 men and women for the aerospace force of the nation; a veteran of the Vietnam and Gulf Wars, he has served as Commandant of Cadets at the U.S. Air Force Academy and as a member of the Joint Staff at the Pentagon; and

WHEREAS, a decorated pilot, he has logged over 3,900 flying hours in a dozen aircraft; and

WHEREAS, the weekend’s activities will conclude with a worship service, with guest speaker Rear Admiral Barry C. Black, Ph.D., D.Min., Chief of the Chaplain Corps for the U.S. Navy; during his remarkable career in service to his nation and his Lord, Chaplain Black has

earned personal decorations including the Legion of Merit Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, two Meritorious Service Medals, two Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals, numerous unit awards, and campaign and service medals; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, he received the NAACP Renowned Service Award for his contributions to equal opportunity and civil rights; and

WHEREAS, in the words of Pastor Bill Adkins, "During this current wave of patriotism in America, it is a good time to take note of the vast contributions that African Americans have made serving this nation"; and

WHEREAS, numerous other African American veterans will participate in these and other events that the members of the Greater Imani Community Church and Christian Center have planned to commemorate Black History Month; and

WHEREAS, the events have been diligently planned by a committee including, Capt. Clovis Jones, Capt. Mary McAdams, Chief Mstr. Sgt. Haskin Payne, Lt. Col. Elijah Douglas, Lt. Oudrey Hervey, Lt. Col. Rita Works, Lt. Col. Cide Robinson, Maj. Irene Parker, Tobbie Ingram, and Henry Hooper; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Adkins and the members of his congregation have long made numerous contributions that have enriched the cultural fabric of this state, and this celebration of American patriots from Crispus Attucks to Secretary of State General Colin Powell provides another commendable chapter in the congregation's history; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we honor the good people of the Greater Imani Church and Christian Center and join with them in celebrating Black History Month.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.